

BETHLEHEM STEEL COMPANY SHIPYARD, BOILER SHOP?
BLACKSMITH SHOP
(W. & A. Fletcher Company)
1201-1321 Hudson Street
City of Hoboken
Hudson County
New Jersey

HAER No. NJ-95-B

HAER
NJ
9-HOBO,
8B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Northeast Region
Philadelphia Support Office
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, P.A. 19106

HAER
NJ
9-HOB6,
8B-

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

BETHLEHEM STEEL COMPANY SHIPYARD, BOILER SHOP/BLACKSMITH SHOP
(W. & A. Fletcher Company) HAER No. NJ-95-B

Location: 1201-1321 Hudson Street
City of Hoboken
Hudson County, New Jersey

UTM: 18.582400.4511450
Quad: Weehawken, N.J.-N.Y., 1:24,000

Date of Construction: 1890

Present Owner: Shipyard Associates, L.P.
5 Marine View Plaza, Suite 500
Hoboken, New Jersey 07030

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The Boiler Shop/Blacksmith Shop is sited to the east of the Machine Shop within the Bethlehem Steel Company Shipyard complex. This structure was built by the W. & A. Fletcher Company during the initial development of the yard in 1890 to house the facility's boiler and blacksmith shops. The Machine Shop and the Boiler Shop/Blacksmith Shop building served as the central core of the yard during the Fletcher term of occupation. During the Bethlehem Steel Company tenure this building housed the copper, pipe, and turbine shops.

Project Information: The Boiler Shop/Blacksmith Shop is to be demolished as part of the planned redevelopment of the property.

Richard L. Porter, Meredith Arms Bzdak, and Rob Tucher
Rutgers University Center for Public Archaeology
Department of Anthropology
Douglass Campus
P.O. Box 270
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903-0270

History of the Bethlehem Steel Company Shipyard Blacksmith Shop/Boiler Shop

The Blacksmith Shop/Boiler Shop was built in 1890 and formed, along with the original section of the Machine Shop, the central core of the W. & A. Fletcher Company's new shipyard in Hoboken. The larger eastern section of this building originally served as the yard's boiler shop, while the smaller western section housed the blacksmith shop (see Sanborn-Perris Map Company map of 1891 and W. & A. Fletcher Company North River Iron Works view of 1893 in Overview Section). The boiler shop section, which measured 200 feet by 55 feet, was utilized for the fabrication of boilers by Fletcher, while the blacksmith shop, which measured 90 feet by 55 feet and was capped by a monitor roof, handled the yard's forging operations. The yard's stable was attached to the eastern end of the boiler shop. This building continued in these uses and changed little structurally (with the exception of the addition of a number of storage sheds around the exterior) throughout the Fletcher tenure (see Photograph of Tenney map and view of 1907, G.M. Hopkins Company map of 1909, Photograph of Love map of 1919, G.M. Hopkins Company map of 1923, and Photograph of Cross map of 1925 in Overview Section) and during the tenure of the United Dry Docks, Inc./United Shipyards, Inc. interests (see G.M. Hopkins Company map of 1934, Sanborn Map Company map of 1906 [Corrected to 1938], and Photograph of Hoboken Yard General Plan Prior to Lease by Bethlehem Steel Co. in 1938 map of 1945 in Overview Section).

With the arrival of the Bethlehem Steel Company Shipbuilding Division just prior to the outbreak of the Second World War the boiler shop section of the building was converted to house the yard's copper and pipe shop (see Photograph of Sanborn Map Company map of 1944 in Overview Section). In later years the blacksmith shop section was also converted to a new use as it came to serve as the facility's turbine shop. In 1970 the building was shown to be continuing in these new uses, and the two shops included a variety of metalworking machine tools (see Photograph of Hoboken Yard Copper, Pipe & Turbine Shop Plans and Sections of 1970). These uses continued, in fact, until the closing of the yard in 1984 (see Photograph of Hoboken Yard General Plan map of 1983 in Overview Section).

Description of the Bethlehem Steel Company Shipyard Blacksmith Shop/Boiler Shop

The Blacksmith Shop/Boiler Shop is a long, rectangular 2-story brick structure built in two sections and located to the rear of, and extending eastward away from, the Machine Shop. This building, which measures 290 feet by 55 feet in plan, is capped by a gabled roof with exposed rafter ends at the side elevations. A monitor roof occupies the peak of the smaller, western (blacksmith shop) section, while a ventilation outlet is found in the peak of the larger

eastern (boiler shop) section. The smaller western section is 5 bays in length and 42 feet in height, while the larger eastern section is 9 bays in length and 48 feet in height. The openings throughout the building are extremely large and exhibit the characteristic brick-arched lintels also seen in the Machine Shop. The east elevation of this building is dominated by a painted sign that reads "Hohoken Shipyards - Inc." and also exhibits a large central entrance at the ground floor with a large window of more recent construction above (see Photograph). The north and south facades of both sections of the building are dominated by the characteristic arched openings -- some of these openings are intact, while others have been altered in a variety of ways (see Photographs). Within the western elevation the building is accessed through its only opening, an characteristic arched pedestrian entrance in the central bay that exhibits a divided transom and panelled and glazed double doors (see Photograph).

The interior of the eastern (boiler shop) section of the building is a large, fully open work space, with masonry walls supporting timber roof trusses (see Photographs). The western (blacksmith shop) section is smaller, but it too is fully open and exhibits a similar structural system (see Photographs). Both spaces are provided with light by the large arched openings in the north and south walls. The two sections of the building are divided by an interior brick wall with an oversized arched opening (now largely bricked up) providing the necessary connection. A locker room area was more recently constructed against this wall within the western end of the building's eastern section. None of the machinery that was formerly housed within this building remains.

Sources of Information/Bibliography

Engineering Drawings

"Hoboken Yard General Plan." Hoboken: Hoboken Shipyards, Inc., 1983.

"Hoboken Yard General Plan Prior to Lease by Bethlehem Steel Co. in 1938." Hoboken: Bethlehem Steel Company Shipbuilding Division, 1945.

"Hoboken Yard Copper, Pipe & Turbine Shop Plans and Sections." Hoboken: Bethlehem Steel Company Shipbuilding Division, 1970.

Historic Views

Cross, H.N. *W. & A. Fletcher Co. "North River Iron Works"*. Boston: Associated Mutual Insurance Cos., 1925.

G.M. Hopkins Company. *Atlas of Hudson County*. Vol. 2. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins Company, 1909.

G.M. Hopkins Company. *Atlas of Hudson County*. Vol. 2. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins Company, 1923.

G.M. Hopkins Company. *Atlas of Hudson County*. Vol. 2. Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins Company, 1934.

Love, L.B. *W. & A. Fletcher Co. "North River Iron Works"*. Boston: Associated Mutual Insurance Cos., 1919.

Sanborn Map Company. *Hoboken Yard in the City of Hoboken*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1944.

Sanborn Map Company. *Insurance Maps of Hudson County - Hoboken*. Vol. 7. Corrected to 1938.

Sanborn-Perris Map Company. *Insurance Maps of Hudson County*. Vol. 7. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Company, 1891.

Bethlehem Steel Company Shipyard,
Blacksmith Shop/Boiler Shop -
(W. & A. Fletcher Company)
HAER No. NJ-95-B (Page 5)

Tenney, E.H. *W. & A. Fletcher Co. "North River Iron Wks."* Boston: Associated Mutual Insurance Cos., 1907.

"W. & A. Fletcher Company North River Iron Works." In *The Evening News and Hoboken*. Hoboken: The Hoboken Evening News, 1893.

Primary and Unpublished Sources

Bethlehem Steel Company File. Bethlehem Public Library, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

W. & A. Fletcher Collection. South Street Seaport Museum, New York, New York.